

Appln. No.: 10/081,968
Amendment Dated August 2, 2006
Reply to Office Action of April 3, 2006

NSG-207US

Remarks/Arguments:

Claim 5 has been amended. No new matter is introduced herein. Claims 1, 2, 4-8 and 10-39 are pending. Claims 1, 2, 4, 6 and 11-39 are withdrawn from consideration.

Claims 5, 7, 8 and 10 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Tabata et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 6,375,335). It is respectfully submitted that this ground for rejection is overcome for the reasons set forth below.

In particular, Tabata et al. do not disclose or suggest "a reflecting plate arranged on the rear-surface of said light-guide plate, the reflecting plate including a portion which is arranged to be coextensive with the rear-surface of said light guide plate," as required by amended claim 5. Support for the amendment can be found, for example, on p. 27, lines 1-5; and Fig. 17.

Tabata et al. disclose, in Fig. 1, an illumination device in which light entered from an entrance surface to an interior of a light guide element 10 is scattered by a diffusion area 11 to emerge from an exit surface in a predetermined direction (Abstract and Col. 5, lines 61-65). As shown in Fig. 1, the diffusion area 11 is provided on a part of a surface of the light guide element 10 along the length of the light guide element 10. (See also Figs. 4, 7, 15-23 and 27-33). Tabata et al. do not disclose or suggest a reflecting plate arranged to be coextensive with the rear surface of the light-guide plate, as required by amended claim 5. Tabata et al., instead, provide the diffusion area 11, which is described as being reflective, that covers only a part of the light guide element 10 in order to direct light in a predetermined direction. Accordingly, Tabata et al. cannot disclose or suggest a diffusion area that is coextensive with a rear-surface of the light guide element. Thus, Tabata et al. do not disclose or suggest all of the features of claim 5.

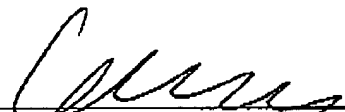
Because Tabata et al. do not disclose all of the features of claim 5, claim 5 is not subject to rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Tabata et al. and claims 7, 8 and 10 which depend from claim 5 are not subject to rejection under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Tabata et al.

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In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants request the Examiner to reconsider and withdraw the rejection of claims 5, 7, 8 and 10.

Respectfully submitted,


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Dated: August 2, 2006

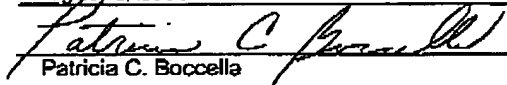
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August 2, 2006


Patricia C. Boccella

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